



Post 2015, Goal 16 and Lessons on Indicators

Civil Society Perspectives from the New Deal Work on Indicators

The *New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States*, adopted at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan (Republic of Korea) in December 2011 by participating g7+ (conflict affected) governments, international donors and civil society, is a path-breaking effort to ensure more effective development cooperation for conflict affected and fragile states. The New Deal takes as its starting point that conflict affected and fragile states require Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals (PSGs) – alongside and in some cases as prerequisites to effectively meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). From 2011-2013, New Deal partners intensively reflected upon how to measure the PSGs, and developed a set of 34 “common indicators,” while pilot countries also developed “national indicators” to measure these goals. These common and national indicators exist across the PSG areas of *legitimate (inclusive) politics, security, justice, economic foundations, and revenues and services*. As such, there are clear overlaps with many of the issues that member states have agreed to include in the post-2015 framework, notably under Goal 16.

While the development of indicators within New Deal focused on a specific group of countries represented by the g7+, and the Post-2015 framework discussions address universal targets in all countries, there are nonetheless critical lessons that can be drawn from the former for the latter. These lessons are captured in the following key messages that have been developed by the Civil Society Platform on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS). This civil society body coordinates and supports civil society engagement in the New Deal process. Its g7+, Northern, and wider Southern civil society members have participated as one of three primary New Deal stakeholder groups throughout the process.

Key Messages on Indicators

Goal 16 is measurable

While measuring peace, governance and justice with universal indicators presents challenges as it does with all of the goals, *the targets proposed under Goal 16 are measurable*. Where monitoring gaps do exist, ensuring the inclusion of Goal 16 in the post-2015 framework will create incentives that boost political will and generate needed resources to address them. Developing capacities for these tasks should be seen as a process. The MDG framework provides precedent; similar challenges existed in 2000 when they were agreed, and while data is still missing in many areas of the framework, 15 years of attention have significantly improved data availability and reporting on collectively agreed global priorities. We now have the opportunity to do this on a more comprehensive set of issues.

Numerous stakeholders have presented robust research on how the targets under goal 16 can be measured. For example, Saferworld in 2013 identified over 160 multi-country datasets that can measure different aspects of peace.ⁱ The UN System Task Team has provided ample evidence as to its measurability.ⁱⁱ

There is need to balance between “common” and “country specific” indicators

There needs to be a balance between universal (global) and national (country specific) indicators. This message came out *strongly* in extensive examination and debate through the New Deal process.

- *Universal (global) indicators* should comprise a short list of indicators that represent truly universal priorities that need to be measured. Since the post-2015 framework lays out global targets, we need comparable data to know when they have been met at global level.
- *National (country specific) indicators* should comprise complementary sets of indicators to address the well-recognised challenge of securing universal indicators that hold weight across all national contexts. While this will lead to some data that is not comparable through standardised comparative measurement tools, there are global mechanisms that exist and can be utilised to ensure knowledge and experience sharing between and across countries. Data on country- or region-specific indicators can be collated into a single open and accessible database, for example, at the international level. Furthermore, countries should have sufficient policy autonomy to decide how they meet targets and in what

sequence. Unless stated in the target, benchmarks for targets should be established at country-level, and not prescribed arbitrarily or imposed in ways that are context insensitive. Country specific indicators and benchmarks should be developed through participatory processes involving civil society.

Together, a combination of universal and country specific indicators will draw upon the strengths and mitigate the weaknesses of both approaches. This will support collective international efforts to advance the robustness and effectiveness of measuring progress across countries, while enabling member states to build nationally owned processes that speak to context specific realities. They will provide richer pictures of what is happening internally, and how to address specific challenges towards effectively meeting universal targets.

Disaggregation of indicators is a key strategic tool for measuring peace

Civil Society strongly agrees with the language in the Open Working Group Proposal for Sustainable Development Goals, that it will be important to have data and statistics disaggregated, where appropriate, by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability, displacement and migratory status, statelessness, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

While vertical inequality is often linked to violent crime and interpersonal violence, *horizontal* (or group) inequalities are a key driver of violent conflict and other forms of insecurity and vulnerability.ⁱⁱⁱ Horizontal inequalities underscore the need to disaggregate by social, ethnic or religious group or geographic location, though likely more important on some indicators than others. *This is crucial not just for Goal 16 but for all the goals across the framework.* The welcomed Goal 10 on reducing inequality, for example, needs strengthening in this regard. Addressing horizontal inequalities through disaggregation is a crucial way in which the entire Post-2015 framework can contribute towards sustainable peace and safe societies.

A diversity of indicators (and types) are needed to arrive at an objective, reliable and efficient evaluation of peace, security and governance

A crucial lesson from the New Deal process is that no single indicator can in every context tell a full, fair story about progress: changes in capacity are not the same as better outcomes – and better outcomes are not enough unless they generate confidence among all social groups. As no indicator can present a full, reliable picture, combinations (or “baskets”) of indicators should aim to capture a fuller picture. This would prevent the risk that particular indicators suggest misleading results and obscure efforts to address structural challenges for the development agenda to be realised.^{iv}

A more accurate picture of progress as it relates to peace, governance and justice can be better guaranteed if each relevant target is underpinned by a combination or basket of indicators that capture:

- Capacity: Is government and social capacity being developed to enhance peacefulness, prevent conflict, improve governance and widen access to justice?
- Objective change: Do statistical measures of actual societal conditions show that improvements are being achieved?
- Subjective, or public perception: Does the public feel that improvements are occurring?
- Experience based measures: Does the public have the experience of something (e.g. being asked for bribe)?

Peace, governance and justice priorities should be ALSO infused across the post-2015 framework

Greater attention is needed on mainstreaming peace, governance and justice across the whole framework. This would respond to the strong policy consensus over the last decade that a range of factors underpin peaceful and inclusive societies, and that all development practice must factor in analysis of what drives conflict and violence.^v For the indicator framework, this means thinking about how efforts towards attaining peace, governance and justice priorities are measured across the goals and targets, and provide practical opportunities for identifying cross-cutting targets and indicators. This in turn can strengthen integrated analysis of multi-faceted development challenges and potentially reduce targets and indicators.

The Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS) is the official forum for coordinated civil society participation in the International Dialogue for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS), bringing together a diverse representation of civil society globally.
info@cspps.org - www.cspps.org - www.facebook.com/civilsocietyplatform - @idps_cspps

ⁱ Saferworld, “A Vision of Goals, Targets and Indicators: Addressing conflict and violence from 2015,” 2013.

ⁱⁱ UN System Task Team, “Statistics and indicators for the post-2015 development agenda,” 2013.

ⁱⁱⁱ Brinkman H-J, Attree L, Hezir S, “Addressing horizontal inequalities as drivers of conflict in the post-2015 development agenda,” Saferworld/UN PBSO, February 2013.

^{iv} The Power of Numbers project, for example (examining lessons from MDGs) has produced findings that illustrate problematic tendencies, particularly with the use of quantitative measures that claim to capture objectivity.

^v Two useful documents on mainstreaming throughout the framework are: CSPPS, “Putting Sustainable Peace and Safe Societies at the Heart of the Development agenda: Priorities for post-2015,” 2013. PBSO, UNICEF, UNDP, “Report of the Expert Meeting on an Accountability Framework for Conflict, Violence, Governance and Disaster and the Post-2015 Development Agenda,” Glen Cove, New York, 18-19 June 2013.